

EXHIBIT 7

NewsCrime and Public Safety

State recommends \$92,000 settlement for lawsuit filed by transgender inmate against Maryland officials



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By [Dan Belson](#) | dbelson@baltsun.com and [Mary Carole McCauley](#) | mmccauley@baltsun.com | Baltimore Sun

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The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and the Office of the Attorney General have recommended a \$92,000 payment to settle a lawsuit alleging the state's prison system refused to allow a transgender inmate to receive hormone therapy.

The proposed settlement would settle one of several lawsuits against state officials filed by Amber Maree Canter, a transgender woman who said in the lawsuit prison officials denied her request to continue a hormone therapy regimen she had started prior to her 2013 incarceration.

The settlement would cover Canter's attorney's fees, and is on the agenda for a Feb. 15 hearing before the state Board of Public Works.

Canter's attorneys wrote in the lawsuit that Canter was diagnosed with gender dysphoria, the discomfort or distress caused by the discrepancy between gender identity and sex assigned at birth, prior to her being incarcerated at the North Branch Correctional Institution and, later, the Western Correctional Institution, which are both in Cumberland.

She began hormone therapy in 2013, shortly before she was arrested and later sentenced to 15 years, suspended down to six, for armed robbery and violation of probation convictions, according to court records.

While Canter was incarcerated at North Branch, she repeatedly told prison medical personnel of her diagnosis and allowed her former healthcare providers to send records of the diagnosis to the prison, requesting to continue on her hormone therapy regimen, according to the lawsuit. The prison staff declined to allow her to continue, and refused to let her be evaluated by a gender specialist.

The prison's refusal led to multiple self-injury attempts by Canter, as well as a medical issue due to estrogen withdrawal, according to the lawsuit.

Prison officials wrote in court filings that no mental health professionals had informed the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services that Canter suffered from gender dysphoria, and that she was seen by a specialist a few months before her parole date.

After Canter was paroled in 2017, she was evaluated by the specialist, who confirmed her gender dysphoria diagnosis and placed her on a hormone regimen. But when she was incarcerated again in 2019, this time at the Western Correctional Institution, her hormone regimen was repeatedly interrupted, the lawsuit alleges.

The settlement would put an end to one years-long legal battle between Canter and the state corrections department. She originally filed the lawsuit in 2017, adding on to it when she was incarcerated again two years later.

Canter is also suing the corrections department in state and federal court for a separate matter in June 2019 at the Central Booking and Intake Center. There, Canter was injured after being choked by a corrections officer. Three officers involved in the encounter were later [indicted on criminal misconduct charges](#).

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